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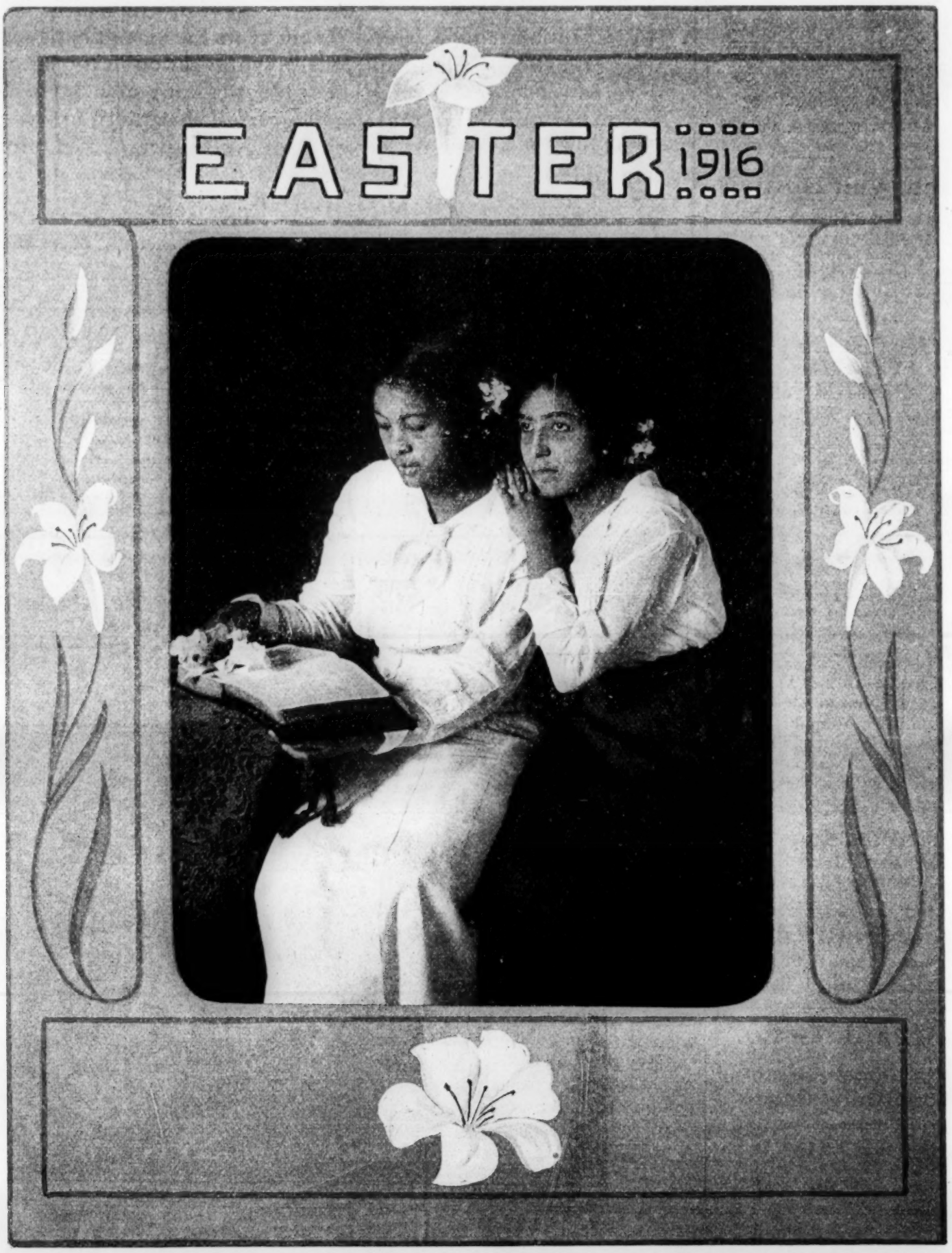
THE NEGRO FARMER

AND MESSENGER

VOL. 3, NO. 8
APRIL 22, 1916

TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE
ALABAMA



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AND MESSENGER

PUBLISHED EVERY OTHER WEEK.

ISAAC FISHER....Editor and Business Mgr.

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The Editor's Page

AN EASTER EPISTLE TO THE COLORED CHURCHES EVERYWHERE

The white church is losing hosts of its young people. I hope this condition will be changed (1) for the highest good of the white people; and (2) because everything my race has had of good; all that it now possesses; and all that it will possess of highest value, I venture to say, have come, now abide, and will be made possible through the real Christian spirit of the white people of this country. Sneer, if we will, at the timidity of the organized white church in the presence of grave social problems concerning the Negro and at its failure to prevent grave injustices to the black man. Over against these, I will set the fact that if it had not been for this same white Christian church, "we, of all men would have been most miserable." God save the white church of the risen Jesus! for I am vitally concerned in her salvation and preservation. But I am especially concerned about the church which my people compose.

Educated Young Colored People and the Church

Gradually, the colored church is losing its former stronghold on its young colored people, especially the young educated people. Again and again, I have heard some colored ministers denounce education because they charged it with making these young people feel "too smart to hear the word of God"; and I have noticed that the average young graduate does fall away from the church.

Anxious to know the truth, I have tried to study the causes from books and from young graduates themselves. The books give as one main reason why young people, in general, do not adhere to the church the fact that there are other social organizations, now, which satisfy the young better than does the church. But this did not commend itself to me as the prevailing reason in the case of the young people of a race that for many years has zealously loved the church of God. And I have looked further.

Learning From a Sunday School Class

On each Sabbath, it is my privilege and pleasure to be taught in a Sunday school class by one of the finest groups of young men and women whom I have ever met. The most of them are graduates of other schools, some of normal and some of college grade. They are called post-graduates here, studying, either Tuskegee's methods or some particular trade. They call me the teacher but I am learning more than they are. The class is very large, very interesting, and we are mutually very fond of each other.

It occurred to me to ask these young people (1) whether it was true that they would not be likely to attend the Sunday schools after they left school, finally, with the same regularity as they attend here. The answer was "yes." (2) I asked why they would not be likely to attend, indeed, why so many young colored people from the schools weaned away from the church and Sunday schools.

There was no hesitancy in answering and each pupil wanted to answer; and I want the colored ministers who read this to ponder the answer given:

That large class of men and women, noted here for their peculiar devotion to their Sunday school work, that large body, I say, one after another and then finally as a group said that **in the average colored Sunday school the practice is to discount the educated young people by placing as teachers persons whose main qualification is their piety but whose knowledge in general and of the Scriptures in particular is not broad enough to qualify them to teach persons who have grown accustomed to the more efficient methods of the secular schools;** as a consequence these young people are compelled either to sit mute and accept statements at war with sound interpretation of the simplest meanings of words and with broad knowledge of the Scriptures, or be given the reputation of being "smart because they have been to college," and often in consequence lectured from the pulpit for being wise in the head but void of true religion.

These young people, following the line of least resistance, find it easier to remain away from the Sunday schools; and, hence, from the church; for, be it remembered, the Sunday school has stronger appeal to the graduate than the church, simply because the former is more like the school he has left; but, and I am speaking plainly, if ignorance be set to instruct intelligence, the latter will desert the Sunday schools forever.

The Duty of Educated Young People

When I had heard the uniform reason given by my class for the condition complained of, I told them that it was their duty to stay with these schools

and help change conditions; and I advised that wherever one of these educated persons decided to work, he should seek out the pastor of the church of his choice and offer his services in the Sunday school so that there may be no excuse for poorly prepared teachers in it. I advised this and then, I began doing some serious thinking.

Just a Word, Pastor, a Few Questions

What preparation for teaching have the men and women had who are teaching your Sunday school? Have you a special teacher for a class to which you assign these young graduates—a class in which they are not forced to swallow things they know are not true? Do you ask these graduates to teach any of your classes? Have you discussed this matter with your Superintendent? Do you preach sarcastic sermons in which you say, "I don't care how much education you have, if you haven't the grace of God, your education won't save you?" That's true, but you are driving out of your church the very persons who are needed to help you preserve it.

We Need the Young People

Over and above everything else, the colored people must retain their faith in God; they must continue to lean "on the everlasting arms." Scoff, if we will, nevertheless the religious inclinations of the Negro—his belief in the ultimate justice of a supreme God sustained him through slave-days; it makes him smile now when often he "cannot always trace the way;" and keeps him willing to believe that all will be better "bye-and-bye." We must not and it will be a sin to drive him away from this belief. We must keep pointing these thoughtful young minds to the mercies of God; must keep persuading them to "taste and see how gracious the Lord is;" so that when they come to the end of reasoning, and bitter thoughts come into their hearts against some of the glaring inequalities of daily life they may not lose hope but "look up and trust."

We have a right to expect the church to do nothing to drive them away. Many a time, I have sat in dumb anger and bitter resentment while a sermon was preached at me because I had been to school and could think for myself; and I was not placed in a reverent mood by the sermon; and I say right here and now conscious that my statement will be resented, that if I had not been so thoroughly baptized in a love of the church by very devout parents and a minister, during my early youth, who loved young people with all his heart, the sneers, sarcasm, sermons and attitude of a number of leaders in many churches I have attended since I graduated from school would have driven me out of the church long ago. I simply refuse to be driven out.

Progress

There has been some progress in this direction during the past fifteen years and with the increase of the number of educated Negro ministers there will be more. But there is room for improvement; and the church must not go to sleep. Education in Negro pews has advanced faster than education in Negro pulpits and the pews have grown restless.

The church must go after these young people.

It must be remembered that the Master loved the devout and well-read young ruler who knew the law so well and had tried to keep it; nor did the Saviour rebuke him for his intelligence.

There must be a resurrection from the dead past.

—ISAAC FISHER.

ACTIVITIES AT BALDWIN FARMS ALABAMA

The following report has been made to the Board of Directors of the Tuskegee Farm and Improvement Company, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama:

"Gentlemen: I wish to call your attention to the various activities at Baldwin Farms.

"Mr. Thursten has met all living expenses to date this year with milk, butter, chickens and eggs, and has his land all prepared and some corn, cotton, melons, white potatoes and rape planted, also a good garden started.

"Mr. Darden has carried himself to date with sweet potatoes, and is now selling from his garden. His entire farm is in excellent condition. Both he and Mr. Thursten have opened up some new ground.

"Mr. Lane is working at the sawmill to keep down his expenses.

"Mr. McNeil is milking for Mr. Pompey, thus meeting his living expenses. He and Mr. Lane's brother-in-law are working together on both farms and have same in good condition. Mrs. Lane has seventeen turkeys hatched off, to date.

"Mr. Braxton and his father have thoroughly prepared their farm, hauled over sixty-two horse loads of muck and leaves from the woods, planted corn and have been meeting expenses with sweet potatoes, black-eyed peas and garden.

"Mr. Cunningham has been ill. His daughter, Eloise, is carrying on the farm and station work with the assistance of the colonists. His farm is in good condition. Practically no business at store at present.

"Mr. Pompey's plow is running regularly, but his farm shows the results of the absentee landlord.

"Our share croppers, Hicks and Quinn, have thoroughly prepared their land and have partly planted corn and cotton.

"All lands on both sides of railroad and plantation will be in cultivation an acre wide or more.

"With the assistance of our pastor, Rev. Imes, we are erecting a small building to be used for our church services and other public gatherings.

"We have hauled our fertilizer, and have exchanged some fertilizer for additional planting seed. Have sold from the Company's store room 1,000 pounds acid phosphate on Lane's advance account.

"1,000 pounds on McNeil's advance account.

"1,000 pounds on Darden's advance account.

"1,000 pounds on Thurston's advance account.

"1,000 pounds on Hick's advance account.

"2,000 pounds mixed fertilizer on Quinn's advanced account.

"2,000 pounds acid phosphate to Chandler for cash.

"I have encouraged Messrs. Braxton, Lane and McNeil to construct a cooperative pasture which they have started, letting them have use of some unsold land, rent free. I have done some ditching on my farm, opened up some new ground and have done some planting of corn and cotton.

"Our demonstration plot was planted last year to corn with peas, cotton, millet and velvet beans. Oats were planted on entire plot last fall. The value of the land builders, velvet beans and the peas in the corn, is very noticeable on the oats when compared with the oats on the other plot. Our entire oat crop appears very favorable at present. The Baldwin Farms Agricul-

tural Club continues to meet regularly the second and fourth Friday evenings in each month, and asked me to thank President Bridgeforth and the Board of Directors for the bag of shoes and mule collars which I distributed to them.

"There is keen competition in our minds at present as to who will raise the largest number of chickens and turkeys. Some have as many as sixty young chicks off now.

"In conclusion I wish to recommend the following:

"1.—That the 15th of July be known as "Crop Inspection Day" at Baldwin Farms, and that the Board of Directors or a committee appointed by them, thoroughly inspect our crops and premises, and that the following prizes be awarded to the settlers at our annual picnic that afternoon:

"A prize of $7 to the man having his crop in the best condition.

"A prize of $3 to the man having his crop in the next best condition.

"A prize of $5 to the lady having her home, garden and poultry in next best condition.

"A prize of $2 to the lady having her home, garden and poultry next best.

"Also, to encourage early harvesting of crops, I recommend free ginning of the first two bales of cotton ginned, and a $3 prize to the man who first harvests his entire crop.

"2.—We have sign boards placed at the two forks of the roads nearing Baldwin Farms; signs to read: '—Miles to Baldwin Farms,' same can be painted for $2.00.

"3.—That we invite the Teachers' Annual Picnic to be held at one of the various suitable places at Baldwin Farms.

"4.—That an appropriation be made to use in getting up pamphlets and circular letters to be sent to all Tuskegee graduates and ex-students whom we know to be farming and to such persons whom we might interest in locating at Baldwin Farms.

"5.—That we purchase the mule log drag now at the Blacksmith shop for sale. Same can be purchased for $15.00.

"6.—That we either borrow or purchase a disc harrow from the school, which can be put in repair. A disc harrow is an absolute necessity at Baldwin Farms.

"7.—That an auto trip be arranged to bring the Institute Board of Trustees to Baldwin Farms in May. Luncheon of home products (if possible) to be served by our wives.

"8.—That the extra mule secured to assist in land preparation be kept through planting and oat harvesting and if necessary be kept through the year to assist in cultivating the various farms.

A. G. CHANDLER,
Superintendent."

Farmers' Dictionary

RAISING MONEY TO BUILD A SCHOOLHOUSE

Just as soon as the proper persons have selected a location for the new schoolhouse * * * and the plan for the schoolhouse has been secured, the very next step is to get the money with which to build. In many Southern States, funds for building schoolhouses for public education are not furnished by the State, while some offer a part of the money needed; the other is raised locally by the people who are to receive direct benefit.

Mass Meetings

Through the pastors and other leaders, work up a big meeting at which some good speaker will preach the doctrine of good schoolhouses from his heart—a man or woman who can stir and put new life into a dead community. Explain and show the drawings of the new buildings at this meeting, giving the amount to be raised locally.

Methods

Special educational rally days, basket suppers, evening socials, concerts, opossum and rabbit suppers and a canvass for help among the white people of the community, are some of the ways local funds can be raised.

Organization

To raise money locally requires strong leadership. To get the best results from strong leadership there must be organized effort. To co-operate with the white officers a strong, wide-awake committee or trustee board of at least five persons, should exist. Let this committee or board have a hustling chairman or president and a treasurer with the reputation of knowing how to spend money to advantage, also a secretary who is a safe and careful record keeper. Go farther — organize the women into clubs. It often works well to select two women and these two choose equal numbers of associate women. These two clubs can work in friendly competition to excel in the amount of money raised for the school. The teacher may take the school children and the young people not in school into a special club for raising money; also the committee or trustee board can be pitted against all the other clubs to beat in raising the necessary money. All this requires much push and tact on the part of the teacher, if successful. Days of labor, building material, money or land can be pledged and given in every case where the new building calls for it.

Special Rally Days

Through pastors, with the consent of churches and leaders of clubs, appoint a special day and hour for the educational rally. Secure, if possible, a live speaker who believes thoroughly in good schoolhouses and who can put information and inspiration into the audience where he or she speaks. Let good singing, good speaking and the giving of funds for the school building be the features of the day. At the first rally spend very little time collecting cash, but get every club and individual to subscribe their share of the three or six hundred dollars to be put into the schoolhouse. Pledges can consist of money, labor, lumber, nails, etc. Keep the rally spirit alive until the new schoolhouse building is completed.

Basket Suppers

When the women want to raise money they often cook good food at their homes and each takes a basket of this to a common meeting place where the men and others are served, but charged a good price for what they eat. Singing, speaking and harmless games can be put into the program for the basket supper.

Evening Socials

Often a very profitable evening can be spent in having a committee furnish a table of refreshments to be served, while at intervals the parties present engage in "Pinning the Donkey's Tail," "Ship's Coming," "The Fishing Pond," "Custard Party," etc.

Concerts

Old and young folks not only enjoy looking on the concert but to really "act" themselves is great fun. A paid cash admission to the concert is a good plan in rising money.

Opposum and Rabbit Suppers

"Opossum and Rabbit Suppers" are on the same order of the basket supper and often prove to be a means of pleasure and profit. Care must be taken not to allow any undignified methods of raising money.

The Land Owners

Don't fail to call on and interest the white citizens and land owners in giving aid to buiding the schoolhouse. A land owner can readily understand how a dollar put into a schoolhouse will enhance land values by bringing a better class of renters to the community.

Handling Money

Deposit the money as per the recommendations of the State or County school officials, especially if the schoolhouse is to receive State aid. Where the money is held by the committee or trustee board, it should be in a bank and only paid out by checks from the treasurer, countersingned by the president and secretary.—Tuskegee Extension Department Bulletin.

STARTING THE COTTON CROP

Adapt Methods to Variations in Soil and Climatic Conditions

By W. D. Bentley, Stillwater, Oklahoma

For the best results, cotton should have a deep, well prepared seedbed. The soil should be broken deeply. If the breaking is done in the fall or winter and there are rains sufficient to settle the soil, it probably will be firm enough by planting time. But if the breaking be late, or there be little or no rain after fall or winter breaking, the soil should be firmed with the subsurface packer, or a disk set straight, before planting. Cotton will not grow off rapidly if planted on a loose seedbed. This fact probably gave rise among old cotton growers to the saying that the taproot of a cotton plant must reach hard soil before it will make any growth. This sometimes is given as an excuse for shallow plowing for cotton.

Very rich bottom land, where the tendency is for the plants to grow very large, is an exception to the general rule of deep plowing for cotton.

A deeply plowed seedbed will store moisture that will keep the cotton growing and setting fruit during dry weather that would seriously damage cotton on shallow plowing.

Sandy soils that are liable to blow never should be plowed until late spring, after the danger of high winds has passed. Listing and planting in the furrow at the same time is the proper method for these soils. Neither should a section harrow be used in early cultivation of these soils. The sled-disk cultivator, or tools that will leave the protecting ridges as long as possible, always should be used on soils liable to blow."

Time to Plant

Cotton should be planted as soon as possible after all danger of frost is over and the ground warms up. Nothing is gained by planting before the ground is thoroughly warm. Cotton is a hot weather crop, and cold weather checks the growth of the young plants and enables the weeds and grass to get a good start before cultivation begins. It is better to do extra harrowing to fine the surface and destroy sprouting grass and weed seed before planting than to plant before the ground is thoroughly warmed.

Planting should not start until the ground is warm down to moist dirt so the seed will germinate quickly and grow off rapidly.

Cotton seed should be planted very shallowly, especially when planted early. As the season grows later and the soil warms down deeper the seed may be planted deeper. The seed is planted deeply enough when it just reaches moist dirt, no matter how shallow that may be. The seeds that come up first are usually those accidentally dropped on the ground at the end of rows and simply tramped into the ground and not covered at all. If care be taken to firm the moist dirt around the seed, it can scarcely be planted to shallow. Some good cotton growers claim that the seed are too deep unless a few uncovered seed be seen behind the planter.

A Furrow Between Rows

In regions where the rainfall is ample, it is considered best by most farmers to plant cotton on a level surface if the land is well drained. Level planting makes the first cultivation, while the plants are small, much easier than if planted on a ridge. In regions where there is much rainfall a furrow between the rows is important.

Land that is not well drained or inclined to be cold should be bedded up and the cotton planted on the ridge. This is the general custom in the Eastern part of the State where the rainfall is greatest. The bedding up may be done in late fall or winter, or very early spring. The land should be harrowed with the ridge before planting. Dragging the tops of the ridges off with log or plank drag is often done.

Throwing two furrows together on unplowed land, dragging off and planting on the ridge and dropping the seed on unplowed soil, is not best except on very rich bottom land, where the tendency is to make too much plant growth. The best results may be expected by bedding up the land in the fall or winter and rebedding in the spring before planting. An excellent plan is to flatbreak in the fall or winter and bed up before planting.

In the Western part of the State, and wherever the rainfall is short or irregular, cotton always should be planted in the bottom of a shallow lister furrow. Wherever practicable in the Western and Central parts of the State it is well to run the lister furrow east and west so that the ridges will afford protection to the young plants from the prevailing north and south winds. Cotton so planted may be cultivated more economically than either ridge or level planting. The section harrow and tools made especially for the cultivation of small plants in the bottom of lister furrows make the cultivation both rapid and economical.

The Main Problem

In the Western and Central parts of Oklahoma the great problem in crop production all the time is the conservation of moisture. In the Eastern part of the State, during the early part of the season especially, the great problem usually is to get rid of surplus water.

In planting cotton in lister furrows in any part of the State there is always the chance that a heavy rain will bury the seed so deep that it cannot break through. In the lister furrow method of planting cotton it is usually best, after one of these rains, to plant the crop over as soon as the ground is dry enough, and not waste valuable time hoping that cotton enough for a stand will finally come up. Trying to break the crust over the cotton seed in the bottom of a lister furrow, so that it can get out, is not, as a rule, satisfactory. It will in most cases pay to plant over at once. Whatever method of planting cotton is used, great care is necessary in Oklahoma not to plant the seed too

deeply or to plant it too early. These two mistakes every year cause the cotton growers of Oklahoma the loss of many thousands of dollars.

Amount of Seed to Plant

The cotton grower always should save two or three times as many seed as he expects to plant. It frequently happens that a second, and sometimes a third planting is necessary. Farmers who fail to save an abundant supply of planting seed often are forced to use gin-run seed, or seed from the oil mills, when it becomes necessary to plant over.

To be sure of a stand under average farm conditions in Oklahoma, from 3 to 5 pecks of seed should be used to the acre. Under ideal conditions a peck of seed to the acre would be sufficient but, as a rule, a perfect stand of cotton cannot be obtained with less than three pecks of seed. It is best to use at least a bushel of seed to be sure of a stand and chop out later as desired. The combined pushing strength of a lot of seed close together will break through a crusted soil that seed spaced singly could not possibly break.

To produce cotton cheaply the cost of cultivation must be reduced to the minimum. Modern two and four-horse tools should be used wherever practicable. The hoe and the Georgia stock are excellent tools with which to cultivate cotton, but entirely too slow to be used economically where more modern tools can be used at all. The hoe must be used in thinning, but its use should be reduced to a minimum. A two-horse cultivator usually may be used more economically on stumpy land than a one-horse tool that requires two or three trips across the field to complete the cultivation of one row.—The Oklahoma Farmer.

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A. A. Chandler, Baldwin Farms, Route 1, Milstead, Alabama.

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INCOME OF RENTERS AND OWNERS

By O. R. Johnson, Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station

The total farm income of owners in the Western part of Johnson County, Missouri, is $942 a year as compared with $838 in case of part owners, and $578 in case of tenants, as shown by a farm management survey recently made by the Missouri College of Agriculture. This means that the part owner who had only a little more than half as great an investment made nearly as much as the man who owned all the land he operated and the tenant with a very small investment almost two thirds as much. This relatively good showing of the tenant was brought about in part by cropping the land more severely. He had about one-third of his farm in corn as compared with one-fifth of the owner's and one-seventh in wheat as compared with one-twelfth of the owner's. He had only a fourth of his farm in grass or clover while the owner was building up about half of his acreage in this way.

The total average investment of the owner was $12,555, of the part owner $7,633, and of the tenant $1,547. The owners and part owners had about the same amount invested in machinery, but the tenant had only a little more than two-thirds as much and about the same may be said of the investment in live stock. As the owner farmed 135.9 acres, the part owner 146.6 acres, and the tenant 133.5 acres, it is easy to see that the tenant farmed more crop acres per man, per horse, and per machine, and he made money accordingly if we consider only the labor income instead of the total farm income figures just given. After deducting from this total farm incomes five per cent to pay interest on the investment in land and equipment, the owner had left a labor income for his own efforts of $314, or about $1 a day; the part owner $456, or about $1.50 a day; and the tenant $501, or $1.75 a day.

The cash rent tenant made a much lower income for himself and paid the owner from whom he rented land a much lower percentage on his investment than either the share tenant or the mixed rent tenant. The percentage return on the investment to the owner of the land was greatest of all in case of the man who farmed only his own land.

If we divide the farms of this Johnson County region into eight classes we find that the highest labor income of $608 per year was secured by those who farmed their own land in part and rented additional land for cash from their neighbors. The other groups in order of labor income were: (1) the part owners who rented additional land in part for cash and in part on a share basis, (2) the share rent tenant, (3) the mixed rent tenant, (4) the cash rent tenant, (5) part owner share renting additional land, (6) the owner who rented some land to his neighbor, (7) the owner who farmed all his own land and rented none either to or from his neighbor. This seems to put the owner at the bottom of the list in labor income, but when the total farm income is secured by adding the interest which these owners secure on their investment, the story is quite different and the figures seem to indicate that the

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included in a bulletin on Farm Bee Keeping by L. Haseman of the Missouri College of Agriculture, and E. E. Tyler, President of the Missouri Apicultural Society. It can be secured by addressing the Agricultural Experiment Station, Columbia, Missouri.

STOP THOSE GULLIES!

Small gullies that have started in the field should be stopped by filling them with straw or similar material. If the gully is large it is advisable to plow in soil on top of this material and sow to oats or later to sorghum so that the crop will come up thick and form a strong root mass to bind the soil together. The proper use of debris for filling and rank growing plants for holding the soil will stop most washes entirely. Eternal vigilance, however, is necessary for complete success.—M. F. Miller, Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station.

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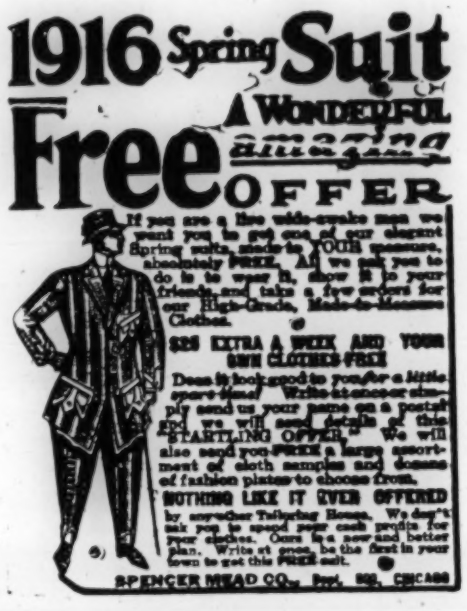

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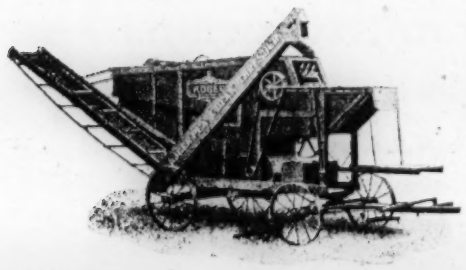

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